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## WHAT HAS BECOME OF SOCIAL REFORM?

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### ABSTRACT

*Changed theories of social reform.*—Fundamentals generally accepted before the war have disintegrated. On few issues can agreement be taken for granted now. Traditional lines of division of opinion tend to disappear and give way to a more realistic alignment. In politics, religion, and science, new influences make for dissipation of authority and more uncertainty. *Agreement in diagnosis, disagreement in prognosis.*—On the main facts of social life and its problems there is more or less agreement with variations in emphasis. Concentration of economic power and the mechanization of life, with the growth of mass organization in revolt against these tendencies, are seen by most as the outstanding problem. In aiming at economic security for all with freedom for individual development, social reformers have something in common with socialists and feminists; but they are distinguished by social realism, and in the diversity of their views are attaining to a greater common understanding of origins, factors, and trends in social evolution. *The function of the social reformer.*—The social reformer is not merely an upholder of existing institutions by meliorative effort, not merely a mediator between contrasting interests. He is, above all, a conservationist and, as trustee for human gains in material and spiritual standards, comparable with the efficient trustee of an estate who is not afraid to destroy at times to build better, to reinvest when by that means the inherited capital can be made more productive. Temperamentally opposed to violent change, he may nevertheless on occasion side with radical programs of relief from existing evils. He is student as well as practitioner and, from the vantage ground of concrete experience, helps to advance the knowledge of social law.

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### I

Twenty years ago it would have been comparatively easy to outline a philosophy of social reform acceptable to the great majority of those engaged in social movements—at least those of enough imagination not to hope for salvation from some single economic,

political, or moral panacea. The Western world was practically at one in what it regarded as steps in advance toward a better social order and in what it regarded as reactionary. Even ten years ago, it was possible for social thinkers here and there to formulate programs that were widely accepted and opposed chiefly by those only who regarded the proposed methods as either too slow or too quick to bring about the desired results. Thus, for instance, the late Professor Charles Richmond Henderson's Barrows Lectures on "Social Programmes in the West" (1912-13) probably did not contain much to which social reformers at the time could take exception if not on one of the two grounds stated. While new ideas and new policies were hotly debated—and especially the eugenists gained strength in their attacks upon reform programs that assumed "human nature" to be an unchangeable factor—the practical reformers, as they met at national and international conferences, were fairly well agreed on principles of social legislation. Differences on more fundamental principles of social progress, it was generally held, need not interfere with a cordial working together on immediate tasks.

Today these circumstances no longer obtain. Not only has the war shaken the Western world out of an easy complacency, but even the most thoughtful people who were anything but complacent in the past have been deeply disturbed in their social creeds. For instance, questions involving nationalism and internationalism, socialism and individual right, state and local community, which had been settled one way or the other by the individual, now obtrude into every discussion. Political philosophies, such as anarchism, that had few adherents have gained support and are eagerly debated. Sentiments that formed a rock foundation of agreement among reformers, even when their opinions on programs differed, such, for instance, as good will toward all mankind irrespective of race and religion, can no longer be taken for granted; for, to regard the "Hun" or the Turk or the Jew or the Japanese, or persons of some specific outlook on life, as not deserving of human sympathies is now common among persons liberal in other respects. In other words, differences of opinion have become both deeper and sharper. It would be foolish to try to reconcile these differences

within the social reform movement so as to make it appear one, united in spirit and purpose. Among his personal acquaintances every reader knows of cleavages that are intellectually irreconcilable. At best, a description of social reform in the after-war period would consist of a setting side by side of concurrent tendencies.

In speaking of social reform in this article, we have in mind not only leaders and professional workers but also the supporters of social movements—whether these be of a practical nature for the attainment of an easily defined end or aiming at the fulfilment of a deeper longing for social justice and betterment. They comprise, therefore, not only radicals or theorists but the large number of people who earnestly wish to live decent lives and leave the world a little better than they found it. Among them we find, in the main, persons and groups of a conservative temperament, indeed, for the most part men and women who are by no means certain of the ultimate consequences of the measures they advocate or support, or conscious even of the exact motives that impel them to do so. Before their social creeds, vague and unexpressed as they mostly are, can be correlated, it is necessary that conscientious men and women of this practical type should search their own souls, should systematize their own ideas and, by discussion in small groups, try to arrive at a separation of those convictions which with them are fundamental and those that are tentative and subject to modification by further study. What follows, therefore, is no more than a preliminary effort. It would be impossible with any certainty to present the dominant note in the social reform movement of America, much less of the Western world as a whole; but we may try to look below the obvious differences of faith and opinion among our socially minded contemporaries so as to ascertain whether the social reform movement in its larger phases has any unity at all—whether, in fact, it is a movement or merely a medley.

To make sure that we shall not unduly stress any implied unity, let us first consider some of the recent influences that have tended to break up what ten or twenty years ago was at least superficially a movement that could be defined and relied upon for more or less coherent practical action. First, as to general attitudes of mind.

We are wont to speak of persons as either liberal or conservative, with the extremes of radical and reactionary. But even as we continue to use these terms, the meaning they once held is departing from them. Liberalism no longer suffices either as a political creed or as an attitude to public affairs; neither does conservatism or socialism. Each has been broken up by the inevitable logic of events into different and, sometimes, opposing factions. Applied in their former comprehensiveness to current political and social thought, they no longer explain but obscure. The war and the reconstruction period have played havoc with many airy dogmas that had long lost their substance though those who held them were not aware of it. In partisan polemics, those dogmas are like the coinage of a former régime that is still cherished by its crusty adherents but has lost its currency. On the other hand, the necessity to think more clearly has had this beneficial effect that it has shown up the non-existence or relative unimportance of differences in political creeds which divided parties. Socialists had long pointed out that in fundamentals there was not much to choose in the philosophy of the "capitalist" or "bourgeois" parties when confronted with live issues. And many non-Socialists now concede that they were right—with this addition, however, that under the stress of war, when national essentials were at stake, even the socialists, except for insignificant left-wing minorities, did not show that independence of spirit and aim which they had claimed for themselves! The fact is that during a period of peaceful progress, while political and economic issues change, the creeds of the political parties do not necessarily change with them; and on fundamentals their platforms differ in emphasis rather than substance. Nor is this at all surprising. In a democracy with geographic constituencies, each party appeals to the whole electorate and is necessarily influenced by the same trends of thought within the constituency. Striking examples were the attitudes of the historic parties in the United States to woman suffrage and to prohibition. The party of state rights by no means became the chief champion of the protestants against the enlargement of federal powers; nor did the party historically leaning for support on industry and commerce lead the ranks of business men against the enfranchisement of millions of

propertyless and occupationless women. Democracy itself, while consistent with the formation and long-continued survival of political parties, makes for a softening of contrasts, an unconscious editing of political doctrine in line with what the politician must regard as the common sense of the community.

Thus it was that, in spite of tremendous traditional differences in viewpoint, the main parties in the various countries could be lined up for common action during the war—and not only on matters essential to victory but often also on other economic and social measures on which ordinarily they were wont to split into opposite camps. And not only in times of national danger but as a general tendency in recent decades, the older creeds have become blurred, sometimes obscured to the vanishing point. The numerical progress of socialism throughout the Western nations, for instance, is only in part due to a larger penetration of the masses with socialist doctrines; it is largely due to the fact that on the one hand liberal radicalism has become more socialistic and, on the other, socialists in practical politics have assumed the slow, progressive tactics of liberalism and organized labor. In England, socialists and liberals have for years accused one another of stealing each other's thunder; in the test of convictions and policies during the war, many of the best of the younger liberals have gone over to the labor party, and many of the ablest members of that party, whose political origin had been the soap box of the socialist propagandist, moderated their views on practical questions almost to the point of conservatism. Here in the United States, the last presidential election showed that the old parties have re-absorbed their mutinous, progressive factions, though the whole circumstances were so unusual that it would be premature to speak of the effort to create a political liberal-radical group as failure. Under the British coalition, and to some extent also in other countries, the barons of land and of industry have combined their forces in common defense of their privileges. At the other extreme, anarchists and communists make common cause in "direct action" against the established order.

The most important element in the change that is taking place is the slow emergence as primary issues of those problems in social and political relationships which formerly were on the horizon but

did not form the main object of party organization and, conversely, a submergence of issues which traditionally loom large in social and political phraseology but which are more and more felt to be abstractions without a strong bearing on current problems. In France and Germany, perhaps, the horrors of the war are still too close and national life is too precarious to permit of any lasting political reorganization on the basis of fundamental political principles. But elsewhere, notably in England and Belgium, compromises on some of the traditional divisive questions have brought into focus political division along the line of more pressing current interests. In a sense, the events of the last three years may be said to have vitalized political thinking and, to that extent, to have contributed to a change in emphasis in party programs. Thus in England a small but live group of liberals, led by Bertrand Russell, has only now become aware to the full of the logically anarchist basis for its political beliefs. The socialists of the world have come to realize that the "class war" and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" are not pleasantly suggestive phrases of an imagination revelling in dreams of social justice but realities for or against which a definite stand must be taken. Pacifists have learned that national patriotism and internationalism can no longer peaceably walk together along a broad road of assumed general "progress" toward an ideal brotherhood of man but must part company at a point—whatever that point may be in the individual's opinion—where trust in the outcome of unhindered international fellowship requires abrogation of absolute national sovereignty.

As in politics, so in religion a marked change has taken place into which, though it was evident long before the war, that event introduced a further, profound modification. Without attempting to describe this phenomenon, let us state it here in its simplest and most accepted terms. Due probably more to the increase of social contacts than to any deepening of conviction, large numbers hitherto confined within narrow groups have had opened up to them new vistas of possible truths. Where once the authority of home and church was accepted unquestioned, the coming together with persons of entirely different traditions and upbringing brought with it a loss of certainty. With the exchange of ministers and the forma-

tion of community churches, with the growth of the forum movement and the increased participation of churchmen in reform movements, old distinctions are dimmed. We are all familiar with the effects of this process. On the credit side it has a liberalizing tendency which may mean much for general progress. On the debit side is the danger of loosened moral standards. Into this melting-pot of denominational creeds, the war threw an ingredient around which a new crystallization of convictions took place; with its immense strain upon the emotions, there arose a new demand for a firm hold on essential truths, a yearning for beliefs which, whether they could be reconciled with previously held faiths or not, would give peace of mind and unity of purpose. This struggle has proved calamitous for many of the weaker brethren who have simply turned from a search for truth to a purely emotional and sensual hold on life. It has been a gold mine for the spiritual and psychotherapeutic quack; but it has also given a sane and wholly desirable stretch to the imagination which, though the impulse was personal and individualistic in origin, also means a more vigorous striving to understand the place of the individual in our complex social life and to satisfy the demands of social conscience.

In addition to politics and religion, we have yet a third influence on everyday life in relation to social reform, and that is the application of science. In this sphere likewise the war has given a new trend to the current range of thought and interests which has reacted upon our social life. Modern science first made the more intellectual section of the Western world aware of the complexity of causes that produce any given result and hence less ready to accept too clear-cut an aim in life, too exclusive a program of reaching that aim. It is now permeating larger numbers; and pulpits which within living memory have attacked the teaching of such men as Huxley, Darwin, and Spencer now preach in the language of the laboratory. Indeed, so far-reaching has been this change that a sermon attacking the evolutionist theory of human descent is looked upon as an anachronism and commented upon by the press as a joke. While, generally speaking, there is not evident any marked lessening of respect for what is regarded as authority, this trend has meant that the groups which exercise authority are



more inclusive. The labor leader, the newspaper editor, the successful business man, have won to some extent the influence which preacher, teacher, and party leader have lost; but even the hold of the newer types of leadership is precarious; and the sense of uncertainty has become more pronounced. Diffusion of authority, or what is regarded as such, has meant a further loss of deep-seated conviction, a more fickle public opinion upon which a skilled actor in the game of public affairs can, for a time at least, play as upon an instrument responsive to any touch. Unscrupulous individuals and interests have taken advantage of this situation and developed an effective technique of influencing the public mind. A flood of disconnected propaganda has to a large extent taken the place of coherent education. Prejudices and panics are created overnight by the application of tried psychological methods of publicity to work on an unstable and shallow-rooted public mind. Where, owing to increased knowledge or alertness on the part of the people, open misinformation is apt to meet with derision, subtler means are employed. The war with its flood of government-sanctioned propaganda has developed this technique and the volume of its employment to an unprecedented degree.

A favorite method is that of asserting the existence of secret conspiracies in any movement or enterprise which it is to the interest of the particular "authority" to discredit. Merely to belabor bolshevist doctrines as lamentably unsound, for instance, will no longer carry conviction with the average man who has lost the habit of taking the preacher's or the editor's word for gospel. But a bolshevist conspiracy, or, for the matter of that, a conspiracy of German agents, of an employers' federation, of Jewish bankers, of freemasons, of Jesuits, of foreign diplomats, of Japanese or other immigrant groups—anything lending itself to the diffusion of rumor that cannot be checked up—is a useful instrument for arousing passions because its secrecy precludes examination. The harvest of miseducation is gradually ripening: it means a further confusion of issues, a growing desire of the individual to acquire some new principles by which he can gauge the value of movements about which he cannot hope to secure more than partial and often biased first-hand information.

Permeating all the readjustments and reformulations of conviction there is thus a widespread doubt in the desirability of any previously accepted social goals. Again I am speaking in general terms, not implying that these changes are universal or that this doubt is all-pervasive. But seeing the conflict of forces and ideas which will be admitted as characteristic of our time, should not the attempt be made, at least, to draw together into a skein the loose threads, to discover, if may be, the unconscious unity of purpose which, could we but recognize it, we might gather around and make the beginning of a really homogeneous social reform movement? Perhaps, if we could but understand some of the forces at work to reshape men's thinking, we might, each from his own point of vantage, help to clear up this intolerable mess of ideas and aims! We are living in a time when, as never before, it is essential that as many individuals as possible should try to think through the bewildering mass of phenomena in the mental life of the people, to arrive for themselves at a clearer synthesis of seemingly contradictory trends.

Talk to the young men and women graduating from the colleges, to the ex-soldiers who have gone back into industry, to women conscious of their new civic responsibilities, to manufacturers who are seeing the plans of a lifetime thwarted by labor's new demands, to the "mothers" at a neighborhood gathering, to city-hall politicians, to organized laborers in their local halls, to farmers on their Saturday visits to town, to parish priests, to doctors and nurses who go in and out of the homes of the people, to car conductors, to school teachers! What are they thinking about poverty, about government, about class war, about crime, about education, about social morals, about public health, about armaments, taxes, school boards, finance, the cost of living? If you are old enough, think back twenty or thirty years—what were the same kind of people saying then about the same kind of subject? If there is a change in their prevalent state of mind, what is it?

One thing is certain: men and women are not as ready today as they used to be to accept simple solutions of intricate problems. Not the most alluring "utopia" could today weld into a coherent party for its attainment any large number of normal people. Not

the most irrefutable logic could weld such a party to an exclusive program along a single line of advance, such as the single tax, public ownership, imperial expansion, protection, or the like. To gain and keep its adherents, it would have to enlarge that program by the addition of a more varied body of purposes. It is temperament, today, that cements "causes" much more than programs philosophically justified to the last letter.

Among the more educated, this sense of uncertainty has for its complement a clearer recognition of the economic undercurrent of modern political movements; a recognition, that is, not limited by interests and bias but more and more penetrating the existing lines of group division. There have always been those who have predicted the downfall of all existing institutions and, according to their interests or temperament, tried either to hasten or retard it. But perhaps never has there been a time when the sense of impending revolutionary change has been so general among those who think, or so well understood in its main features. And this general phenomenon is not contradicted by the fact that in every community there are men and women of outstanding personality who tenaciously cling to the concrete tasks of social betterment in which they are engaged, trusting that so much endeavor cannot be wholly lost, warding off all possible doubts with an enthusiasm that sustains them through all trials. Yet, they cannot imprint their optimism upon those around them. On all sides the observer meets with a feeling of gloom in view of what seems a catastrophic end, not only to past achievement but to the orderly methods of progress themselves by which that achievement was to have been maintained and increased. In its essence all that smiling, back-slapping, morale-making "put your worries in the old kit bag" philosophy of the efficiency fraternity is direct evidence of this gloom. But there is also gloom among those who do not deplore social change as such but believe that a freer and happier era of social life cannot come about without severer crises, more widespread suffering, bloodier revolutions than any experienced hitherto.

So far we have briefly reviewed general tendencies. What is the attitude toward them of that somewhat shifting and loose element which is grouped around the standards of practical social reform must next occupy our attention.

## II

In a world suffering from irresolution, politics tend to become either timid and motivated only by the needs of the hour or dogmatic and academic, unrelated to present needs. Social reformers, accustomed to deal with realities and with humanity in groups rather than in mass, cannot fail to reflect that two-fold and contradictory tendency. Few books are now written by social reformers that analyze a given situation and on the basis of that diagnosis outline a program for, say, the next quarter of a century. There are, however, many books which on the basis of ascertained facts either plead for some specific immediate measure or for a general doctrine of social readjustment which it would take centuries to accomplish. And yet, social students and observers are united in one thing; that is a common diagnosis of the main contemporary problems. Some glaring exceptions notwithstanding, they have among them a certain unity in interpretation of the trend of events, of the outstanding facts, however far they may be from agreement on remedial measures. In such matters as crime and deficiency, housing, conditions of labor, illiteracy—to mention a few of the more commonly discussed of current problems—most reformers recognize as such the same evils.

More comprehensively, in the diagnosis of the social problem as a whole, agreement is somewhat less but still obtains to a certain extent. Occasionally a solitary voice may be heard, reducing that problem to a question of political systems or racial imperfections; but the great majority, while recognizing many allied problems, will lay the emphasis on economic maladjustments. On one thing all, or nearly all, are agreed: that any thorough diagnosis of the social problem which can be accepted as sincere prohibits the assumption of an easy optimism. The men and women who demand some comparatively simple change as a preliminary to perpetual bliss are few and far between. In spite of unmistakable evidences of improvement, both in material well-being and in the ethics of society, there may be noted so swift a sharpening of the main social contrasts as to make every advance of today and yesterday a mere incident that hardly counts in the more basic readjustments under way. It is possible, of course, to draw all sorts of conclusions from such facts—where they obtain—as an increasing

number of home owners, the growing number and size of savings accounts, a higher standard of living or better care of children; and usually the conclusions drawn, even by social students, are optimistic. But these are signs only of growing material prosperity; and that prosperity, quite apart from such temporary check as we are experiencing at this moment, is no armor against decadence. It is when we come to evidences of moral and spiritual advance, matters more difficult to evaluate, that even schooled observers differ widely. The optimist notes the lessening percentage of illiteracy, the decrease of crime (when observed over a sufficiently long period), the growth of high-school and college attendance, the larger use of public libraries, the improved "tone" of the average community—combined results in part of relative prosperity and in part, perhaps, of prohibition. The pessimist points to the increasing moral laxity, the growth of injurious habits, the debasement of press and theater, the miseducation of the masses by the commercialized moving picture, symptoms of increasing feeble-mindedness, decrease of church attendance, lack of respect for the authority of superior knowledge or attainment.

If this were all, it would be impossible to speak of any agreement in diagnosis. But many reformers feel that facts such as those mentioned, important as they are, represent changes on the surface merely when compared with the infinitely vaster problems of social reorganization under the hammer blows struck by the two opposing forces in the economic war that is raging today—on the one side a world-proletariat awakening to a sense of its power, on the other a concentration of wealth and power such as even a hundred years ago would have been unimaginable. What is illiteracy or a crime wave at a time when humanity runs the danger either of virtual enslavement or of loss of its cultural heritages through vandalism on an unsurpassed scale! Until these two tendencies, as they enter their deadly combat, are understood at least in general outlines, no agreement on programs and policies for the next ten or twenty years can make a united movement of the social reform groups. And that understanding must include not only an interpretation of ascertainable data but sufficient imagination and vision to comprehend the less concrete facts which, arising from a long past, shape the events of the future. That social reformers lack such vision is

often asserted by radicals; and there is certainly some truth in this criticism. To have any influence at all on significant events, the reformers must more fully concern themselves with large questions of public policy, must become conscious of the singular power which their vantage point affords them.

Again taking this group in the widest meaning, as including not only professional social workers and leaders of causes but all those who, though their main occupations may lie in another direction, wish appreciably to contribute to the betterment of social life, no agreement can be claimed for their understanding of the fundamental issues in the present war between privilege and social justice. Nevertheless, it may be attempted to outline at least a common basis for discussion.

There have in previous epochs been concentrations of power and wealth which, if they lasted long enough, produced an aristocracy combining the physically strongest elements of the race with the refinements gained by leisure and luxury. But the new concentration of power that is taking place before our eyes has not even got this redeeming character. It makes for a fuller enslavement of those who wield the power (contradictory as such statement must appear) as well as those who are deprived of their human liberties. The very means of scientific control which convey the new power of the few over the many also drag down the spirit of those who exercise the control. A scientific organization of society in accordance with accurately measured tests of mental and physical caliber and selection for specialized function is making for an evolutionary process in the gain of power far more damaging to the future of humanity than the rougher selection through physical prowess. For, in this process it is neither racial nor cultural value, as viewed from the standpoint of human advance, neither physical nor social inheritance that predominates but a one-sided perfection of specific economically valuable traits—even economically valuable only under a given set of circumstances. If carried on with logical completeness, this process of selection would make for a byzantine stagnation with no visible hope of salvation from it.

To this trend social reform consciously or unconsciously offers every resistance of which it is capable. Unfortunately, however, many of its phases are so disguised or so little understood that they

seem innocuous, even desirable, to men and women in the foremost ranks of the progressive movement. Such, for instance, is the effort to fit youth to one specific career at the exclusion of a general cultural education; such is the use of all known psychological devices to keep the masses happy and contented with their lot; such is the use of mental tests for vocational advancement along lines beneficial not to human progress but to the interests of a small and powerful section of the community that controls its economic opportunities; such is the use of drill, mental and physical, for the equalization of individual abilities in place of the development of each individual according to his innate capacities; such is the choice of "strong" men for leadership, irrespective of their ultimate aims; such is the regulation to a uniform level of customs and habits by legislation and the organization of public opinion; such is the rapidly increasing use of the weapon of intimidation to enforce action by the individual contrary to his judgment.

Whether it be a drive for a "100 per cent" community chest, or the application of rigid, mechanical tests to the selection of public officers, whether it be censorship of individuality in art and literature or housing and zoning regulations that impose artificial standards and prevent experimentation, whether it be substitution of mass action for group action, mass recreation for group recreation or centralization of credit and other economic controls—the general effect of a mechanization of society and drying up of its vital impulses and motivations is inescapable. The only force that can successfully overcome this deadening tendency is a social reform movement which believes in the value of human liberty under economic and political conditions that safeguard *all* valuable human elements, whether these contribute much to material gain or not at all.

A policy based on a correct understanding and evaluation of social facts as gained by intimate contacts with life in all its aspects differs from that of a merely temperamental or doctrinaire policy of negation in that it offers to the current trend a constructive as well as a destructive opposition. It aims at two things which only superficially seem contradictory but in reality are both part of one plan: socialization of resources to facilitate the survival and security

of the economically weak as well as the strong individuals and races, and the creation of opportunities for the development of all individual faculties. In other words, the only type of society that has a lasting attraction to the social reformer is one in which the least may be secure in the enjoyment of life and liberty and in which, at the same time, genius can unfold its wings. The word socialization is here used in no technical sense but as including all the measures and policies for social control that defenders of present conditions condemn as "socialistic"—in other words, the substitution of orderly processes for a wild scramble, the strengthening of social institutions and the handing on of social heritages as against the brutal selective processes of savages. On the economic plane it implies, of course, industry for use and not for individual profit.

The twofold aim here advanced is not acknowledged by any constituted political group, but it has some affinity with that of two strong currents in the political life of the whole Western civilization, socialism and feminism; and this affinity is worth considering.

The emphasis upon cultural values in this definition at some periods has strongly influenced also socialist thought. It formed the principal motive in the teaching of William Morris and John Ruskin (the latter not a socialist himself) by which the socialism of the English speaking world has so largely been guided. Unfortunately, with the newer schisms in the socialist ranks, this motive has been somewhat effaced by insistence upon various means of securing economic equality and control by the masses of the machinery of production. With the loose fellowship of social realists which, for lack of a more recognized term, and well aware of the great diversity of outlook among those included in it and of the fact that many of them would disown any affinity to socialism, is here termed the social reform movement, that cultural element is paramount. To those in the fellowship who are professed socialists, greater equality of economic fortune or the substitution of a labor dictatorship for a dictatorship of wealth or military power are not ends in themselves, if desirable ends at all, but means toward the achievement of a much greater boon, the freeing of creative forces for the advancement of the whole human race toward a more complete self-knowledge, self-expression, and self-development.



So far from basing their programs of action and opposition upon a conception of equality of all human life, they base it upon a recognition of the value of diversity. So far from accepting any static utopia of ultimate material and spiritual bliss, they assume an infinite possibility of progress, not limited even by a perfected control of the material resources of the universe in the interest of the human race as a whole. They go further than organized Christianity in the humility with which they view all human accomplishment, further than Hellenism in the pride with which they view the unlimited potential greatness of man as creator.

To some it may seem as though the trend in social thought characterized above were merely the emergence of hitherto suppressed feminine traits; for woman has traditionally been modest in self-esteem and immoderately hopeful for the future of the offspring; anxiously concerned for a stabilized economic and social order in which existence would be secure and yet strenuously opposed to all artificial impediments to individual growth. But here again, while many feminists find in the advanced wing of the social reform group a sufficient affinity of purpose to accept it as their own, the emphasis is different. In the reformer's social outlook the masculine traits of the finest periods of virile civilization are not missing: there is in it a love of adventure, a fearless confronting of the unknown that has nothing in common with the traditional feminine viewpoint. The new fellowship for which we would plead if, perhaps, we go too far in claiming for it a concrete existence, is one rather of men and women who accept a balance of male and female propensities, who glory in the enrichment of life by the freest expression and working out of ideals no matter where they originate. Not only both sexes with their different experience but all races and classes, no matter how diverse or limited their contribution to the common stock may hitherto have been, are called upon to give the movement unity by its inclusiveness of experiences and ideals. For, it is this richness of spiritual texture that counts for most, not a purity of doctrine that could be maintained only by rigorous definition and exclusion.

A rich orchestral harmony will produce a strain more resonant than the loudest trumpet call upon a single note. So the new

school of socio-political thought, if such it may be called—a school in the making if not in being—while emphasizing certain dominant notes also sounds along with these many lesser under- and over-tones. Whether it offers for the future a more hopeful guidance than movements more conspicuously doctrinaire may best be gauged, perhaps, by observing it at work, fertilizing thought and action, in one of the major branches of practical social endeavor. In the social settlements of England and America we find many men and women who, in the main, come closer to the definition here given of the social reform movement than any other single group. They have no permanent concrete program other than that of residing among folks who have had fewer opportunities for a full life, to make friends with them, to take up any job of social betterment within the neighborhood or affecting the neighborhood that needs doing and passing it up again when others, better equipped to see it through, can be found to take it over. It is neither propaganda for some specific ideal nor a sentimental humanitarianism that determines the activities of the more representative settlements. Critics who complain that this or that part of their program is inadequately carried out, are entirely off the mark, for there is no definite program. In the larger settlements trained workers often take up their abode to pioneer in specialized activities; and in that case a somewhat institutionalized functioning of the settlement group as a whole may result. But even here it is the open door, the open mind, and the open hand rather than a set schedule that count for most. Often the residents deliberately distribute themselves over a neighborhood to increase their contacts with the neighbors and to avoid the danger of institutionalism. “Perpetually disturbed over the apparent inequalities of mankind,” as Miss Addams says, the settlement worker desires “to interpret democracy in social terms,” “to aid in the race progress,” to bring about “a new form of social success due to the nicety of imagination which refuses worldly pleasures unmixed with the joys of self-sacrifice.” “The one thing to be dreaded in the settlement,” she says, “is that it lose its flexibility, its power of quick adaptation, its readiness to change its methods as its environment may demand.” Well may the Lusks and Stevensons include some of these settle-

ment workers and others who act in their spirit among the destructive forces in society; for this very alertness to changes in social needs of which Miss Addams speaks makes them continually demand changes in social structure. But these critics fail to recognize that such workers are also potent forces for the creation of the most important stabilizing factor in society, namely that conscientiousness and willingness to co-operate which is at the very bottom of all social organization and the state itself.

Jokes are often heard at the expense of the little "stage army" of "forward-looking men and women" who, with or without the aid of others, apply the spirit that is in them to some "cause." But although a joke numerically among our hundred and ten million, this army is replete with a diversity of talent, experience, and temperament which exemplifies the thought suggested above, that it is harmony of motives rather than purity of doctrine that counts for most in the unity of a great reform movement. Some of this coherent though diversified group are persons who have thrown over inherited conventions and environments to associate more fully with those among whom they wish to work; some have been born into the group or imbibed its spirit at an early age without having become conscious of effort on their part; some belong to it at the cost of continuing struggles with former attachments and an inner conflict of loyalties; some are advanced in years, emancipated by a mental revolution from previous conceptions of their social aims and duties; others are young, aggressive, even intolerant in spite of the essential tolerance of the movement (just as some of Christ's disciples were intolerant). Some see in the life of service to which they aspire and to which they devote all their gifts a natural continuation of their former way of living, some a complete break with it. To some it is no more than a tentative groping away from fettering dogmas toward freedom for themselves and others; to some a complete and satisfying experience. Some are cynics in part, with a sentimental undercurrent of love for their fellow-men of which they are a little ashamed; others are fanatics who will go to any martyrdom for the least significant aspect of their cause and the least clarified of their ideals.

But in all this diversity of approach and attitude, the central cohesion of understanding and aim is growing. Its force cannot be measured by any accepted standard because into it enter many factors. The hope of the social philosophy that underlies this reform movement lies not in the firmness of its tenets or the number of its adherents but in the uniqueness of the position it holds amid the decaying idealisms of the world and the disintegration of the older social and political doctrines. Thoroughly realistic, based upon an understanding of origins and of the present facts and trends of social dynamics, essentially creative, the movement emerges from the war and the after-war disorder of the world a potential rallying ground for all the best there is in the striving of our troubled times. The acorn is stronger than the oak; when the tornado sweeps over the forest, the old oak may fall, but the acorn has within it the potentiality of unending life.

### III

It is often contended by socialists and revolutionists that social reform is merely bolstering up moribund social institutions and, for that reason, postpones rather than advances the improvement of the social welfare. This is true to the extent to which social reform makes possible the continuation of abuses of power and privilege that involve inequality of fortune, exploitation of the many by the few, cultural decay and petrefaction of an obsolete social system. Bismarck's social legislation was openly advocated as a prop for the existing order rather than the inauguration of a better one. The programs of reactionary parties, almost throughout the world, are full today of specific measures designed as sops to the conscience of mankind and to ward off larger changes. Unfortunately, the "fellowship of social realists" here under discussion often has been deceived and lent itself to works that in purpose were antisocial. The desire to see some concrete achievement of their aims, if only partial, often induces reformers to compromise with forces which may in the long run work against the full achievement of those aims. But the criticism is not true of social reform as a whole or of the larger range of its activity and influence.

The main justification of social reform is that at a time of disintegration and rapid change it conserves values without which even the most far-reaching social revolution, whether peaceful or otherwise, must be viewed as a catastrophe. The social reformer is a conservator, but not a conservative in the current meaning of that word—not a stand-patter, opposed to all change. His sympathies often are with the radical and revolutionary elements in society because necessarily his intimate knowledge of social ills predisposes him to under-rate rather than over-rate the advantages of the *status quo* and, correspondingly, to seek for avenues of escape from existing conditions. And thus, while pursuing essentially conservative purposes, he often finds himself in the midst, if not at the head, of destructive social movements.

These are generalizations which, with the admitted complexity of social reform and the variety of ideals and purposes that animate it, will, perhaps, not be allowed to pass unchallenged. It is, therefore, necessary to add that among social reformers there are also many who are wholly conservative and as timid of change as the old-time Tory whereas, on the other hand, there are among them radical doctrinaires who are really revolutionary propagandists first but who, for one reason or another, are keeping their hold upon practical affairs by giving much of their time and effort to some concrete task of social upbuilding. But it is safe to say of the majority of social reformers, in America and England at least, that they are not primarily theorists, that they are not out to uphold or destroy any social order, that they are not detached critics but actors who propose to take part in the working as well as in the designing of social machinery.

To understand the part played by social reform, it is necessary to distinguish between aims and methods. Destructive and constructive activities are no more logically in conflict as a part of coherent social movement than they are in the work of the builder who demolishes and excavates in preparation for an essentially constructive enterprise. The purely destructive propagandist who smashes up systems and institutions without rearing better ones in their place, or without definite plans for such upbuilding, is as one-sided as the conservative who blindly opposes all change.

Neither is a social reformer in the sense of the term adopted in this article.

Again, the criticism that the social reformer is essentially a mediator between conservatism and progress must be emphatically denied. As it happens, one of the main tasks of social work lately has been that of mutual interpretation between groups that have fallen so far apart that they no longer understand each other's language. Mediation between workers and employers, between government and governed, between foreigners and native-born, between city and country is not an aim in itself—even though it may well fill worth-while careers; it is rather a method of freeing both the processes of conservation and of change from the needless shackles of misunderstanding. The onlooking revolutionary doctrinaire may welcome friction between groups and classes, the imperialist reactionary that between races and nations, because it engenders states of mind helpful to their respective policies; but to the social reformer such antagonism is merely so much extra weight to be lifted. It is only natural that he spends much effort to get it out of the way.

What, then, is the principle upon which he works, what the ideal that animates him? Having no brief to speak for all the varied branches of social reform, a tentative estimate must take the place of authoritative pronouncement. For, if we were to try by direct quotation to put together a body of opinion, we should only involve ourselves in a maze of contradiction. Some will say that their ideal is the fostering of home life as the fundamental human institution. Others will dwell upon the rights of the individual. A by no means negligible group will interpret its aspirations in purely materialistic terms, yet another in the language of Christian ethics. Knowledge of all these groups and their literature will incline us not to dwell so much on any existing agreement among their foremost exponents of theory as upon the real, if not acknowledged, unity that exists between them and often leads them to common action.

Let us assume a social reformer who, driven from his rut by the experiences of the last few years and challenged to defend his aim and his activity in the light of the present world-unrest, tries to

explain himself. Surrounded as he sees himself by festering social ills, many of them past remedy, he may not absolutely deny the charge of revolutionary intentions. Often, he will admit that it is no part of his conscious endeavor merely to support existing conditions and to stand in the way of a social revolution. For, he may feel that more than a slow and gradual change is needed to remove the overtowering evil of concentrated power in the hands of privileged and often unscrupulous groups. He is not afraid to use the surgeon's knife when he knows that pills and fresh-air treatment cannot save the patient. More often than not, he will envisage the ills of the world merely as results of maladjustment incidental to a general progress in the direction of greater human solidarity and welfare. Indeed, seeing the emergence of democratic institutions in countries which but recently were, as it seemed, unshaken seats of dynastic and autocratic rule, seeing the new spirit of democracy rejuvenating political systems and industrial relations even in countries that have long enjoyed quasi-democratic constitutions, seeing the immense efforts made, not in one Western country but in practically all, to embody in their statutes laws that will make for greater social justice, for greater equalization of opportunities, for more education and a more sympathetic treatment of problems of destitution and deficiency—seeing, in short, the unmistakable signs of progress in the world along the lines long advocated by liberal and labor parties and by enlightened social groups everywhere, he cannot fail to be impressed with the validity of the claims made by the advocates of evolutionary as against revolutionary advance.

But if he is capable of training and temperament to comprehend the inner meaning as well as the surface phenomena of large bodies of fact, if he is an observer of tendencies as well as of accomplishments, he may also sense that in spite of all this "progress" our civilization is drifting toward a dead end. Progress, as it is usually understood, in view of the tendencies that accompany it, may to him seem merely to prolong a state of suspense; and at the end of much mitigation of unfreedom and misery he may see a certain and inevitable conflict of forces, currents above which the present liberalizing and meliorative movements are no more than the shallow eddies of a passing tide. That conflict, as it comes to his vision,

whether as imminent or as eventual, he realizes will be one of life and death, of materialism and spiritual emancipation, of privilege and democracy, of brute methods of racial evolution and human methods.

Looking more closely upon his world of reconstructive progressivism, this more than ordinarily alert observer sees forebodings of a catastrophe that sooner or later may overtake, at any rate, the white races of the world. The war, he finds, has not only made the world poorer but has immensely increased the power of a few individuals and groups in every country. The press, often in the hands of unscrupulous financial interests, seems to him in danger of becoming more and more a mouthpiece of propaganda for privilege. While corruption of the old hand-to-mouth type has to some extent gone out of politics, the influence of economically powerful lobbies has increased manifold. Thinly disguised as mandates, increases in their colonial possessions have given some few nations, or rather small, exploiting groups within them, vast wealth at the expense of smaller nations. The fate of ancient races is haggled over the green table of diplomats in secret conclave. New weapons of economic warfare have been invented to strangle political and economic experiments disliked by the ruling powers. Movements of population are impeded and bargained over in the interests, again, of small but powerful groups. Parliaments are openly flaunted by executive branches of government, and side by side with the politically representative parliaments of peoples, there are growing up industrial parliaments—notably in the new republics of Europe—which practically assume control over the most important economic processes within the nation and, though nominally representative of labor as well as capital, really are tools in the hands of big industry. The decreasing influence of old universities and the growth of new universities devoted to the needs of commerce and industry is gradually undermining the freedom of teaching and overemphasizes the value of economically useful abilities as against the advancement of learning for its own sake.

If he saw nothing else and yet persisted in his peculiar mixture of constructive, mediative, and destructive activities, our social reformer would lay himself open to the criticism that he wilfully



engaged in a losing battle. If the whole civilization and cultural tradition in and for which he stands must sooner or later "go to the dogs," why does he exert himself at all? Why does he not enter the main fight and quit his feverish hustling on the fringe of the battle?

The solvent of this imagined contradiction—a contradiction nevertheless, though here stated in a bareness that exaggerates the clearness with which it presents itself to the mind of the average social reformer—is to be found in yet another function which to some appears the most central, the most important of all. The social reformer may be a sentimentalist or merely a professional busybody, he may be more exclusively devoted to practical work or to theorizing, more optimistic in his forecast or more pessimistic than he has been pictured here; but in the most developed stage he is essentially a student. As such, he knows better than the doctrinaire revolutionary what institutions must be destroyed and why, better than the conservative man of affairs what must be conserved and why. He has comprehension for values which the non-studious type either disregards altogether or assumes without examination. And he desires to hold fast to that which is good amid so much that is evil. On the other hand, being actively engaged in some constructive task or other, he has a finer sense for realities than the academician. He knows better than either which social ideals correspond to merely passing conditions and which are fundamental and permanent; he knows what is the cost of change in terms of life and happiness.

In making these claims for the social reformer, one may be accused, possibly with some right, of attributing to him functions that really belong to a science, sociology. But it is a fact that the most resourceful and successful reformers of our time are scientists as well as practitioners. It is not in the medical schools alone that medical science is advanced but also in the hospitals, the clinics, and the consulting rooms of individual physicians. Even more so in social science, the world of study, laboratory, and workshop is linked up in a continuous process of diagnosis, prognosis, and curative treatment. In fact, this close relationship of study with practice is one of the peculiar achievements of British and American social

work, distinguishing it from that of the continent of Europe, where social *science* has filled the libraries with learned tomes; where social *work*, until it began to be fertilized by Western ideas, hardly outgrew the kindergarten stage of sentimental crusading with inadequate means against superficially diagnosed social ills. In America, more especially, important advances in sociology in recent years have often been made in the field by men and women deeply immersed in practical activities. As examples one need only mention the contributions of the mental clinics to the knowledge not only of mental deficiency but also of normal psychology, the co-ordination of research and preventive work in the anti-tuberculosis movement, of legislative agitation and careful investigation of industrial conditions by such bodies as the National Consumers' League, the Association for Labor Legislation, the National Child Labor Committee, and others, the study of and preparation for catastrophic emergencies by the American Red Cross, the Americanization Studies—for the most part carried through by practical social workers—of the Carnegie Corporation, the analysis of the problems of city growth by the city planning group, the studies of industrial psychology by various labor managers, and so on.

All this is not to say that many social workers do not blindly follow a routine any more than that the best medical practitioners are also always prominent in the advancement of medical science. But in general it will be conceded that the physician is a man of science as well as of practice. This is an important point when applied to the whole movement of social reform. It is essential to the claim here made for it; and lack of appreciation for this comprehensive character of the movement has led to much unjust criticism. Here, for instance, a student of social currents, after reading an early draft of this article, says:

As sentimentalist, busybody, crusader or in any similar capacity, the reformer has done some good work, in fragmentary directions and with incidental programs. As such he has been primarily a liberal: he has been concerned with some obvious evil in the community, he has worked for its eradication, he has been satisfied to quit when that was accomplished—though he may have turned loose energies that are not content to quit until they have carried the program far beyond the limits of common sense and made the work ridiculous. I do not think any patchwork program can be defended today. Con-

servatism will make its own defense. The only clean defense against revolutionary movements that the social worker can make today is that he has made what Fergusson calls the "revolution absolute," that is, has accepted the rôle of the student and faces the future as a student—of the whole problem of progress.

This statement is wrong in two implications: that the social reformer, generally speaking, is a patchworker and content to quit when some obvious wrong has been righted; and that the functions of practical reformer and student are mutually exclusive. The charge that "causes" are often carried on to ridiculous lengths, when the immediate purpose for which they were started no longer exists, is, of course, true—though this is not as frequent as he seems to think. We all know of cases where "homes for newsboys" are continued because it seems difficult to close them, long after that occupation has so completely changed in character that such homes are no longer required; or of housing reformers so immersed in questions concerning the thickness of walls and fire escapes that they continue to harp on the need for statutes and regulations in these directions when the real housing problem is that houses are not built any more at all; or of thrift advocates who worry because savings accounts are not kept up when the real problem is that owing to unemployment a large section of the population has not got enough to eat. But these and similar cases that will occur to the reader, though they are not inconsiderable in number, are the exception rather than the rule; they are ridiculous but not tragic. For the large majority of social reformers, professional and non-professional, the peculiar task in which they are engaged today is not an ultimate goal. They are often aware of its limitations, its comparative insignificance when measured against social need in the widest sense; they go on with it because, though students in many cases, they prefer to be active rather than wait for some great social catastrophe to overwhelm them while they sit by the waters of Babylon and weep.

Having thus staked the social reformer's claim to serious consideration as a scientist as well as a practitioner, we must further examine the statement that it is knowledge of social values which distinguishes him from the non-studious, self-styled "practical man of affairs" and from the theorist who does not concern himself

with human realities. What are the values which he feels called upon to help conserve? Briefly, they are the spiritual gains of humanity in its slow emancipation from a state of savagery. They alone promise a better future for the race; they alone are independent, to a certain extent, of physical changes and proof against decay. Vandalism and other forces, moved by mistaken zeal, may destroy the physical remains of antiquity or endeavor to obscure those of more recent achievement; but if the spirit of Hellas can be saved, if the social message of Jesus can be transmitted unspoiled, if what is of permanent addition to sentiment in the romanticism of the Middle Ages or to knowledge in the science of the Renaissance can be made part of the common heritage of mankind, then that spirit, that message, that sentiment, and that knowledge exert an unending influence on human destiny.

These are merely instances which it is easy to comprehend. In our own time, every year and every day, there are gains to the common welfare that can either be lost or transmitted. There is a continual process of destruction in traditions and customs, and in the civilizing influences of the present time. They can and must be salvaged if there is to be human progress at all. They must be salvaged deliberately, for, left in the assumption that they are self-perpetuating, the greatest inheritances may be utterly lost. For instance, individual liberty and equality of human rights have been little thought of at different times, and it required again and again the effort and sacrifice of individuals, such as Luther, or of small groups, such as the Puritans, to hand on to posterity achievements that had been hardly won. It is sometimes too lazily assumed that gains such as these are what the Fathers of this country called "inalienable." Many instances might be quoted to show that, as a matter of fact, the most common attributes of civilized life are in constant danger of being alienated and permanently lost as races or groups, through some change in fortune, sink to a lower level of existence. What has become of the sturdy Scotch crofter? What of the peasant arts of the greater part of Europe? What has become of the art of the Incas, the language of Milton, the craftsmanship of Michael Angelo and Leonardo? In our huge cities and industrialized states, what has become of the neighborly kindness

of smaller and simpler communities? Where is the skilled farm laborer of yester year?

Not every lost art, of course, was worth preserving, not every form of social amenity, not every ideal. But the task of conserving those gifts and achievements of which humanity is in need now and will be in the future is great enough. It is so great, indeed, that it cannot belong exclusively to one group or class in the community but in any really civilized society must be acknowledged the task of all. For, it requires eternal watchfulness in a thousand different fields and cannot wholly be achieved without a widespread reference for the past and understanding for its gains as well as its failings.

The social reformer has merely burdened himself with special responsibility for conservation within a limited range, primarily that concerning human relationships and the relationship of the individual to society as a whole. In his capacity as conservator he is a trustee for unborn generations. This does not mean that he is forever looking backward. The trustee of an estate, if he knows his business, does not aim simply at conservation of the physical properties given in his care but endeavors to improve the estate, if necessary by sale and reinvestment; he is progressive and aids rather than retards change. If the estate in the care of the social reformer is somewhat less tangible, it is no less real. It is he who battles and contrives for the retention of the greatest wealth men have amassed—wealth of worthy social ideals, standards of living and conduct, traditions and customs. Much of that wealth has irretrievably been squandered, sometimes by the very fact that no socially minded forces were strong enough to hinder the waste, sometimes because the social reformers of the time themselves were misled by new popular viewpoints and preoccupations. Thus we have retained practically nothing of the fine social spirit of the early village community which was allowed to disintegrate without anything larger or nobler taking its place. The virtual enslavement of a vast population of men, women, and children during the Industrial Revolution was countenanced by reformers who were looking merely for the economic gain to society from division of labor without considering the effects of the more and more unequal distribution of the product of labor. Here in America we are in danger of losing

that opportunity for the exercise of the spirit of adventure and enterprise that has transformed the continent from a wilderness into the wealthiest country on earth by not providing it with new fields to conquer. Again, it might have been possible, with a more watchful and better-informed social reform movement, to prevent the immense loss to American spiritual—and eventually material—wealth inflicted by the needless debasement of hundreds of thousands of European immigrants with splendid cultural traditions in our mills and mines.

In truth, the history of social reform is a history of conservation. The most important changes it has instituted have, as a rule, been the embodiments not of new ideals but of old ideals, refound or re-appraised. Carried away, at times, by brilliant but deceptive promises of short cuts to social salvation, reformers as a whole have been sane in their valuation of old and new formulas and have been willing to learn from history. Thus, when economists thought to make prosperity universal on the countryside by inclosing the common fields and distributing all the cultivable land in private property, even those who had the interest of the humble peasantry at heart failed to recognize the impending social consequences. But when the results of that measure made themselves felt in the growth of a landless proletariat and the enrichment of great landholders at the expense of the poor, even Young himself, whose energy had brought about the passage of the inclosure acts, deplored in his old age a mistake made in all sincerity; and rural social reform again became a process of human conservation. Likewise in industry, there were times when the apostles of efficiency who look upon progress as a matter of mechanical perfection have been able to blind those whose concern is primarily with human values. But that is no longer possible today. When he is told that wealth can be immeasurably increased by eliminating “waste” motion, the social reformer wants to know, first, whether the motion in question really is wasteful when studied from the point of view of a physically and mentally desirable rhythmic exercise of human faculties and, second, how it is proposed to distribute the additional wealth.

Now, as at all times, the social reformer (of this enlightened type) looks upon revolution as an unmitigated catastrophe if it

achieves ideals merely that spring from a theoretical interpretation of human needs and not those that have proved themselves in the history of the race. In the prevailing temper of intolerance, all the different groups of social reformers often are lumped together and defamed as a species of "reds" or at least upholders of reds. While obviously, as has already been said, it is impossible here to speak for all reformers, at least it may be asserted for the majority and the most influential of those who really affect public life today, that revolution or any form of rapid change to them is not an isolated object of either hope or fear. While temperamentally opposed to all avoidable violence that expresses itself in dramatic actions, they are aware also of the existence of much violence in suppression that manifests itself most undramatically by slow but none the less painful pressure. They are open to all proposals for liberating the human spirit, or rather what is best in it, but this tolerance does not mean preference for violent or any kind of drastic means if others, educational and slowly progressive, can be conceived as effective. Because he tries to understand the revolutionary as a social product and to distinguish in his "cause" ephemeral and permanently valuable elements, the reformer is often accused as an even greater danger to society than the ignorant or one-sided revolutionary theorist himself. Just because, in many instances, he does not rule out revolutionary processes of change as to be condemned under all circumstances but regards them as possible last resorts where other means of securing justice and liberty have failed, the social reformer of the type here discussed is a moderating factor in the class war, as he has always been in civil strife. The only thing that could possibly be said against him with some trace of justification is that he shovels away the sand in which the ostrich of "practical affairs" would lief bury his head.

From our analysis of his case, it is clear that the social reformer is not holding back revolution simply because all violent change is temporarily painful and must of necessity inflict hardship on some. It is regrettable, perhaps, that a certain confusion of thought—shared by many social reformers themselves—has arisen from the fact that so many who at heart are interested in big social movements are also prominent in movements designed to alleviate pain

and make for immediate happiness. But that combination is psychologically easy to understand. While temperamentally there is every reason why a single taxer, let us say, should also be keenly alive to the burden and suffering of preventable ill health or why a promoter of labor laws should also interest himself in efforts to improve the lot of the aged poor, the main thing they are aiming for in life is not merely the creation of a little more happiness here and there but rather the creation of new foundations for a social life of security and freedom where each may find his happiness in his own way.

Thus, it is by no means true that the social reformer, intent on lessening distress, is always concerned in efforts to slow the pace of great social changes due to forces so great that he cannot hope to control them. But with a sympathetic understanding for all it involves, he often tries to *prepare* for inevitable change. His aim is not only that of preventing hardship but, more frequently and more important, that of trying to carry into the new era the essential gains of the old. Instead of waiting for the flood, he helps to dig channels for its easy flow. He deepens and strengthens the streams of idealism from one generation to another where only by such means it can be saved in a period of spiritual drought; he broadens and diffuses it where only thus its transmission into an uncertain future can be insured. In short, the social reformer is not only a crusader but also an engineer.

His functions permit of comparison also with those of the artist and the husbandman, the scholar and the priest. It has here been possible only to give an incomplete and, perhaps, partial picture of his functions. But an effort, toward which this article is but a slight contribution, to interpret more truly and more dramatically what the social reformer stands for in this period of unrest and change is needed to gain for him the recognition which is his due, to support his courage, to increase his success.